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DEPARTMENT FOR IO FRONT OFFICE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#) [KPKO](#)
SUBJECT: A/S SILVERBERG'S MEETING WITH SLOVAK FM KUBIS

Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During a February 20 meeting with Slovak FM Jan Kubis, IO A/S Silverberg and Acting Permrep Wolff advised FM Jan Kubis that the U.S. would not look favorably on any Slovak action that undermined UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari's proposals on Kosovo in the Security Council. Kubis acknowledged that holding out for a negotiated solution to decide Kosovo's final status risked another Balkan conflict, but warned that Slovak policy will be shaped within a context of overwhelming public support for Serbian territorial integrity. Kubis added that he is working hard to ensure that the Slovak MFA has the "diplomatic flexibility" to play a constructive role on Kosovo in the UNSC. Acting Permrep Wolff highlighted the importance of a unified European position. Kubis asserted that "an interim period" before Kosovo would be eligible to become a UN member would help make Ahtisaari's proposals more palatable to Belgrade.

¶2. (C) SUMMARY CONTINUED: A/S Silverberg informed Kubis that the U.S. is considering possible options for further UNSC action following the IAEA's confirmation that Iran has not complied with its obligations under UNSCR 1737. Kubis confirmed Slovak support for a new UNSC resolution to maintain diplomatic pressure on Tehran. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (U) Participants: FM Jan Kubis, Permrep Peter Burian, D/Permrep Michal Mlynar. USG: A/S Silverberg, Acting Permrep Wolff, AMB Sanders, Poloff (notetaker).

Kubis Fighting to Maintain
Flexible Slovak Position

¶4. (C) A/S Silverberg opened the meeting by noting the importance of Slovak support in the UNSC for Special Envoy Ahtisaari's proposals on Kosovo. Kubis responded that Slovakia is still in the process of "defining its position" on Kosovo, but that its policy would be formed within the parameters of overwhelming Slovak support for Serbian territorial integrity. Kubis said that the current policy debate in Bratislava is whether the MFA will be allowed to take a &generic position8 in the UNSC on Kosovo's status. Ahtisaari's proposals sparked an intense debate in Slovakia and the opposition bloc in Parliament is threatening to put forward a binding resolution limiting the MFA's ability to accept Kosovo independence without Serbian agreement. Kubis said Slovaks are not only concerned about the treatment of Serbia, but also about Kosovo creating a precedent for other conflicts and minorities, "including -- rightly or wrongly -- our situation," i.e. ethnic Hungarians in southern Slovakia.

¶5. (C) AMB Wolff responded that it is highly unlikely that any Serbian politician would accept a solution that endorses an independent Kosovo. At this point, the choice is between a managed process blessed by a UNSC resolution and a unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence that would inevitably spark further violence in the Balkans. Kubis acknowledged the validity of this assessment, "The realm of unilateral actions is dangerous for everyone." Kubis emphasized that he is working to ensure that parliament allows the MFA the "diplomatic flexibility" to play a constructive role in the UNSC. Kubis He suggested that a flexible position would allow the Slovakia to vote yes if their support was necessary, but the Slovaks would abstain otherwise. Kubis suggested that flexibility might allow their Permrep to vote yes if his vote was necessary, but Slovakia would otherwise abstain.

Kubis: Don't Take Unified
European Position for Granted

¶6. (C) AMB Wolff highlighted the importance of a unified European position on Kosovo, particularly in New York. Russian arguments regarding the potential precedent for restive minority groups and the superior durability of a negotiated solution have some resonance with developing countries on the UNSC. If Europe presents a unified position, however, the African delegations and others will be more inclined to defer to the European policy.

¶7. (C) Kubis agreed that a unified EU position is preferable but repeated his warnings about Slovak domestic politics. Likewise, Kubis warned that a unified European position should not be taken for granted, "Three EU countries are not there yet." (COMMENT: The context of Kubis comment did not

make clear which countries he was referring to; possibilities include Slovakia, Romania, Cyprus, Spain and Greece. END COMMENT.) In regard to Russia, Kubis commented that it would be difficult to convince them to "at least abstain." AMB Wolff responded that the Russians had not yet clarified their position, but they were guaranteed to fight harder if Europe shows any lack of unity.

Resolution Timeline

¶8. (C) Kubis raised concerns with Antisarri's timeline, saying that the decision would "definitely need to be taken sometime this summer, but not before then." Later in the meeting, Kubis offered the end of May as a possible start date for work on a UNSC resolution. AMB Wolff responded that if we lapse into May, then Russian interests would likely result in an effort to delay until the G-8 Summit in June. The more we delay action in the UNSC, the greater the likelihood of unilateral actions leading to a new Balkan conflict. Kubis said he would be interested in &brainstorming8 on timing issues during his upcoming meetings in Washington.

¶9. (C) In regard to the content of the resolution, Kubis said the "more we speak about Kosovo's independence, the harder it will be to sell the framework to the Serbs." Kubis urged the inclusion of an interim period before Kosovo would be eligible to become a UN member state, arguing that this point would be especially important to make the framework palatable to all parties. AMB Wolff agreed that putting forward a viable framework is important, but noted that Ahtisaari's package is extremely generous to the Serb minority in Kosovo and a resolution to the Kosovo question would remove a major obstacle to a European future for Serbia.

Iran

¶10. (C) A/S Silverberg said that IAEA Director General's report is due February 21 and will likely confirm that Iran has not complied with its obligations under UNSCR 1737. As a result, the U.S. will have to begin considering possible options for further UNSC action to maintain diplomatic pressure. Kubis confirmed Slovak support for a new UNSC resolution commenting, "Our policy on Iran is consistent -- we will support all efforts to pursue them in the UNSC and the EU." A/S Silverberg thanked Kubis for Slovak support, noting the highly constructive role played by AMB Burian and the Slovak Permanent Mission during the UNSCR 1737 negotiations and throughout the Slovak UNSC presidency.

¶11. (U) A/S Silverberg cleared this message.

WOLFF